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News Release

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Federal prosecutors charge various drug-related offenders

Drug-related prosecutions continue to be a priority of the federal government, and the number of cases keeps on growing as several people were recently indicted by grand juries on drug-related charges.

A pair of brothers were charged Nov. 13 in connection with manufacturing a large amount of marijuana in a Brooklyn Park residence. Ryan Thanh Dinh, 36, Burnsville, and Nahn Thanh Dinh, 34, Brooklyn Park, were each indicted on one count of conspiracy to manufacture marijuana, one count of manufacturing marijuana and one count of using and maintaining premises for manufacturing marijuana.

According to an affidavit, the West Metro Drug Task Force started investigating the Dinh brothers in August 2007, and had observed Ryan Dinh purchasing equipment, supplies and materials commonly used to grow marijuana indoors from several stores. Investigators, according to the affidavit, observed excessive condensation built up on several windows of Dinh's Brooklyn Park residence, and observed a large V pattern spreading out from the roof vents where the frost had melted off.

On Oct. 29, 2007, police conducted a traffic stop on Ryan Dinh, and detected a strong odor of marijuana emanating from the vehicle. Police recovered approximately 37 gallon-sized vacuum-sealed bags of freshly harvested marijuana buds in the SUV. The bags weighed approximately 1 pound each.

The affidavit states police executed a search warrant at Nahn Dinh's Brooklyn Park residence on Oct. 29, 2007, and uncovered a large-scale sophisticated indoor marijuana growing operation in the south side of the home. Officers recovered approximately 1,100 marijuana plants, along with tools, equipment and supplies used to grow marijuana. The affidavit states that the Dinh brothers had built a tunnel in the basement to tap into the electrical lines to steal power for the operation.

If convicted on all counts, each Dinh faces a potential maximum penalty of life in prison. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge. This case is the result of an investigation by the Drug Enforcement Agency, the West Metro Drug Task Force, the Hennepin

County Sheriff's Office, and the police departments of Brooklyn Park and Burnsville. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Andrew Dunne.

In a separate indictment, DeMarcus Carod Howard, 30, Minneapolis, was charged Nov. 14 with one count of conspiracy to distribute and to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine and cocaine, one count of possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine, and one count of possess with intent to distribute cocaine.

Howard's indictment alleges that from an unknown time through Oct. 23, 2007, he knowingly and intentionally conspired with unknown others to possess with intent to distribute 50 or more grams of crack cocaine. The indictment also alleges that on Oct. 4, 2007, Howard possessed with intent to distribute approximately 45 grams of crack cocaine, and that on Oct. 23, 2007, Howard possessed with intent to distribute cocaine.

If convicted, Howard faces a potential maximum penalty of life in prison on the conspiracy count and 60 years on the other two counts. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge. This case is the result of an investigation by the DEA and the Bloomington Police Department, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Tracy L. Perzel.

In a third indictment, Robert James Deans, 54, Bismark, N.D., and Jason Robert Zeimes, 36, Plymouth, were each charged Nov. 14 with one count of conspiracy to distribute cocaine and one count of distribution of cocaine.

Their indictment alleges that from July 1, 2007 to Nov. 1, 2007, the defendants knowingly conspired to distribute approximately 9 ounces of cocaine, and that on Oct. 4, 2007, the defendants knowingly distributed 9 ounces of cocaine.

If convicted on both counts, Deans and Zeimes each face a potential maximum penalty of 80 years in prison. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge. This case is the result of an investigation by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and the Blue Earth County Sheriff's Office, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Leshia Lee-Dixon.

In a fourth indictment, Victoriano Barbosa-Leyva, 21, Worthington, was charged Nov. 14 with one count of conspiracy to distribute actual methamphetamine and one count of distribution of actual methamphetamine.

Barbosa-Leyva's indictment alleges that from August 2005 through Oct. 21, 2005, he knowingly and intentionally conspired with unknown others to possess with intent to distribute approximately 82 grams of actual methamphetamine. The indictment also alleges that on Oct. 21, 2005, Barbosa-Leyva knowingly distributed approximately 19 grams of actual methamphetamine.

Methamphetamine is one of the most popular illegal drugs in Minnesota, according to the Hazelden Foundation. In 2006, methamphetamine addiction accounted for 8 percent of treatment admissions in the Twin Cities, and 480 methamphetamine-related hospital emergency department episodes were reported in the Twin Cities.

If convicted, Barbosa-Leyva faces a potential maximum penalty of life in prison on the conspiracy charge, and 40 years on the distribution charge. All sentences are determined by a

federal district court judge. This case is the result of an investigation by the Central Minnesota Drug Task Force and the Todd County Sheriff's Office, and is also being prosecuted by Perzel.

In a fifth indictment, Jesse Lee Jensrud, 26, Hibbing, was charged Nov. 14 with one count of possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine and one count of possession of a firearm by an armed career criminal.

Jensrud's indictment alleges that on Oct. 17, 2007, he unlawfully and knowingly possessed a .22-caliber semi-automatic pistol and a .357 revolver. Jensrud has seven previous convictions in St. Louis County, including burglary and possession of a controlled substance. The indictment also alleges that on Oct. 17, 2007, Jensrud knowingly possessed with intent to distribute 50 or more grams of methamphetamine.

If convicted, Jensrud faces a potential maximum penalty of life in prison on the firearms charge and 40 years on the methamphetamine charge. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge. This case is the result of an investigation by the DEA, the Boundary Waters Drug Task Force and the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Andrew R. Winter.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by the defendant. The defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.